

Canadian Embassy



Ambassade du Canada

501 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001-2114

April 28, 2004

Division of Dockets Management (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

ATTN: Docket No 2002N-0278

Interim Final Rule - Prior Notice of Imported Food: Reopening of Comment Period

The Government of Canada requests a 60 day extension to the comment period being allotted for the reopening of the interim final rule Prior Notice of Import food notified under the Docket No. 02N-020278 and published by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Department of Health and Human Services, in the Federal Register of April 14, 2004.

We welcome the opportunity to provide further comments on the interim final rule for Prior Notice and are encouraged by the request from FDA for specific information concerning the integration of flexible alternatives with the Rule. However, we are concerned that the 30 day comment period will not allow us to consult adequately with our stakeholders and formally explore with FDA officials effective alternatives in response to FDA's specific request.

We are also concerned that our industry is not yet fully aware of the rule's impact, since during the initial period of implementation, feedback to affected industries from FDA and Customs and Border Protection concerning non compliance has been minimal. Therefore, further experience under the stepped-up enforcement period will provide for more informed comments which will be of better use to the Food and Drug Administration.

The Government of Canada makes this request on the understanding that such an extension will not interfere with the final publication of the Rule which is scheduled for March 2005.

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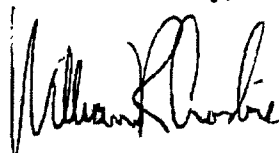
02N-0278

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Please contact John Masswohl at 202-682-1740 with any questions you may have regarding our request for a 60 day extension on the comment period provided for this Rule.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William R. Crosbie', written in a cursive style.

William R. Crosbie
Minister-Counsellor
(Trade and Economic Policy)

c.c: Dr. Lester Crawford, Acting Commissioner, U.S. Food and Drug Administration
Robert C. Bonner, Commissioner, U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Ambassador Robert Zoellick, United States Trade Representative

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Economic and Trade Policy Section / Affaires économiques et politique commerciale
501 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
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Date: April 28, 2004

To/à: Ms. Jennie Butler (301) 827-6870
Division of Dockets Management (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration

Ref/réf: Interim Final Rule - Prior Notice of Imported Food: Reopening of Comment Period

Please see attached document.

Pages 3

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "M. Fanchot".

For: Birgit Matthiesen
Commercial Officer
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